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SUBJECT: CUBA SOLIDARITY - EMBASSY VATICAN ACTIVITY

REF: STATE 51536

¶1. (SBU) In response to reftel, Embassy Vatican reports that Ambassador Glendon hosted an important and well-attended conference this month commemorating the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the crucial role of Latin American countries in creating that document. WHA Assistant Secretary Shannon spoke at the conference, along with Ambassador Glendon, several ambassadors of Latin American countries to the Holy See, and Professor Paolo Carozza of Notre Dame, who has just been elected Chairman of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. The conference featured a moving presentation by Pablo Perez-Cisneros, the son of Guy Perez-Cisneros, who as Cuba's UN delegate in 1948 played a major role in the creation of the Universal Declaration, and a film clip of Guy Perez-Cisneros speaking at the United Nations about the Declaration. Pablo Perez-Cisneros specifically drew attention to the contrast between the Cuba of his father's day and the woeful state of human rights under today's regime. This conference received tremendous favorable publicity, and is only the first of three we will host this year on the theme of Human Rights.

¶2. (SBU) Post also continues to raise Cuba with the Holy See, particularly in conversations with Cardinal Bertone, the Holy See's Secretary of State (ranking just below the Pope) who visited Cuba in February to commemorate the tenth anniversary of Pope John Paul II's visit to Havana. Our scenesetter for the Pope's April visit to Washington and New York included points on Cuba to be raised with Cardinal Bertone. We anticipate another high-level meeting with Bertone in the very near future, at which Cuba may well be an agenda item (this event has not yet been formally announced, but has been confirmed).

¶3. (SBU) Ambassador raised Cuba with several members of the Holy See's Secretariat of State at a meeting on May 16.

GLENDON